

REMARKS

Claims 25 and 28-29 are pending in this application. By this Amendment, claims 25, 28 and 29 are amended and 26-27 are canceled without prejudice to or disclaimer of the subject matter therein. No new matter is added.

Entry of the amendments is proper under 37 CFR §1.116 since the amendments: (a) place the application in condition for allowance for the reasons discussed herein; (b) do not raise any new issue requiring further search and/or consideration as the amendments amplify issues previously discussed throughout prosecution and merely place allowable subject matter into independent form; (c) satisfy a requirement of form asserted in the previous Office Action; and (d) place the application in better form for appeal, should an appeal be necessary. The amendments are necessary and were not earlier presented because they are made in response to arguments raised in the final rejection. Entry of the amendments is thus respectfully requested.

Applicants thank the Examiner for the indication that claims 27-29 contain allowable subject matter.

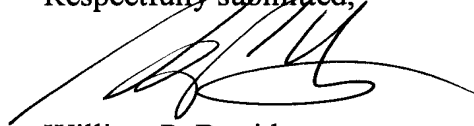
In the Office Action, claims 25-26 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) over U.S. Patent No. 6,474,837 to Belliveau. This rejection is respectfully traversed. However, to expedite prosecution, claim 26 is canceled and independent claim 25 is amended to incorporate the allowable subject matter of canceled claim 27. Accordingly, this rejection is moot.

Withdrawal of the rejection is respectfully requested.

In view of the foregoing, it is respectfully submitted that this application is in condition for allowance. Favorable reconsideration and prompt allowance of claims 25, 28 and 29 are earnestly solicited.

Should the Examiner believe that anything further would be desirable in order to place this application in even better condition for allowance, the Examiner is invited to contact the undersigned at the telephone number set forth below.

Respectfully submitted,



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